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## Making Tracks to Town



PAUL DORPAT

**T**HIS WEEK'S historical scene, a 1923 tableau of municipal workers refurbishing part of the "grand union" of trolley tracks at North 34th Street and Fremont Avenue, allows us to reflect on the histories of both transportation and art in Fremont, the playful neighborhood that signs itself "the Center of the Universe."

First the transportation: When a sawmill was built at the outflow of Lake Union in 1888 it was already possible to conveniently get to the new mill town from downtown Seattle aboard the Seattle Lake Shore and Eastern Railroad, which was laid along the north shore of the lake in 1887. After a trolley above a Westlake trestle was added in 1890, the bridge at Fremont increasingly became the way to get north to the suburbs — and remained so until the Aurora Bridge opened in 1932.

Next, the art: According to Roger Wheeler, Fremont artist and historian, public art as a Fremont fixation began with the formation in the late 1970s of the Fremont Arts Council. Appropriately, its first installation has a transporta-

**THEN:** Public workers put the finishing touches to a refurbished "grand union" of trolley tracks at the intersection of North 34th Street and Fremont Avenue. The 1923 view looks west a few feet from the future neighborhood landmark, the "Waiting for the Interurban" statue.

**NOW:** "Waiting for the Interurban" are Fremont Historical Society members and walking-tour leaders, left to right: Heather McAuliffe, Erik Pihl and Roger Wheeler.

tion theme: Rich Beyer's popular Waiting for the Interurban sculpture. Its figures, though, are pointed the wrong way — north. The interurban to Everett never turned east on 34th, and so would have missed them.

Readers have two opportunities to learn more. First, join Roger Wheeler for his annual guided art tour of Fremont this Thursday. The tour starts at 7 p.m. from Beyer's landmark sculpture. Next, on Aug. 16, the Fremont Historical Society sponsors another stroll. Heather McAuliffe and Erik Pihl will begin their Streetcar Walking Tour at 7 p.m. beside the old Fremont Car Barn at North 34th Street and Phinney Avenue North. **P**

"Washington Then and Now," the new book by Paul Dorpat and Jean Sherrard, can be purchased through [www.washingtonthenandnow.com](http://www.washingtonthenandnow.com) (\$45) or through Tartu Publications, P.O. Box 85208, Seattle, WA 98145.

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7/22/7